UNITED
NATIONS

A

General Assembly

PROVISIONAL

A/46/PV.22
11 October 1991

ENGLISH

Forty-sixth session

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PROVISIONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE 22nd MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 4 October 1991, at 10 a.m.

President:	Mr. SHIHABI	(Saudi Arabia)
later:	Mr. CHEAKA (Vice-President)	(Togo)
later:	Mr. SHIHABI	(Saudi Arabia)
later:	Mr. CHEAKA (Vice-President)	(Togo)
later:	Mr. SHIHABI	(Saudi Arabia)
later:	Mr. CORDOVEZ (Vice-President)	(Ecuador)

/...

This record contains the original text of speeches delivered in English and interpretations of speeches in the other languages. The final text will be printed in the Official Records of the General Assembly.

Corrections should be submitted to original speeches only. They should be sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned, within one week, to the Chief, Official Records Editing Section, Department of Conference Services, room DC2-750, 2 United Nations Plaza, and incorporated in a copy of the record.

91-61361 6308V (E)

- General debate [9] (continued)

  Statements by

  Mr. Rabenoro (Madagascar)
  Mr. Gyaw (Myanmar)

- Address by General Ibrahim Babangida, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

- General debate [9] (continued)

  Statements by

  Mr. Silva Cimma (Chile)
  Mr. Al-Eryany (Yemen)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. RABENORO (Madagascar) (interpretation from French): In transmitting the sincere congratulations of the Government of Madagascar, allow us to echo the words that have been expressed since the Assembly elected you to conduct the business of its forty-sixth session. You are a man of experience, dialogue and conviction, and we know that you will place these qualities at the service of the Organization and of international cooperation.

The same concern guided your predecessor, Ambassador Guido de Marco. Right to the end of his mandate, he constantly took the initiative to strengthen the role of the General Assembly to represent us where events were important, thus committing us to greater responsibility. He did not disappoint the trust that we placed in him, and we are grateful to him.

Finally, my delegation bids welcome to the delegations of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, Korea, the Marshall Islands and Micronesia. We will always be ready to seek and develop with them the common good in solidarity and understanding. We are particularly happy that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea now have an opportunity to work within the Organization for the independent, peaceful reunification of their country, without foreign interference.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

Universality is once again on our agenda. People often talk of the universal acceptance of the principles of the Charter and of certain values, and when we admitted to membership the seven new Members that I have just mentioned it really is the universality of our Organization that we are proclaiming even if the end of the cold war, as in the past the end of the colonial era, promoted expanded participation in international life.

We believe that this participation is essential if we wish to counteract marginalization and hegemony. So long as there was confrontation or rivalry we sought to have recourse to solutions always based on commonly acknowledged, albeit rarely applied, principles, when the time came to take a decision. Our situation was certainly an awkward one because we were convinced that we were siding with reason while at the same time we felt that we had no grip on reality. From one frustration to another we gave less importance to the right to participate, and universality gradually gave way to antagonism or, even worse, to indifference.

But times have changed. The march of history has speeded up and not a month, a week or a day passes without our being assailed by events that are difficult to analyse or react to immediately and whose significance is realized by us through the effects that inevitably follow in other places and in other fields.

In a word, the frenetic and intense pace of events that we are witnessing leads us to believe that we are experiencing a world revolution affecting all human activities. The subject is too important to be skimmed over in an obviously limited statement, but right now we have to define our positions in the context of a situation that we cannot ignore any further. In the meantime, allow me to tie Ariadne's thread and turn to more prosaic considerations, that is to say to the activities of our Organization.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

The Secretary-General has accustomed us to a relationship in which he agreed to share with us his hopes and his disillusionments, his satisfaction at certain positive trends and his concerns about the obligations of Member States. Again this year he has continued in that tradition although we are somewhat disappointed because as a "gentleman", in the classic meaning of the word, he has refused to give an assessment of his mandate.

However these were 10 years during which quietly and patiently he has seen to it that the Organization has a new confidence in itself; 10 years of rehabilitation and revitalization. The work will never be done but it will be recalled that it was under his mandate that the Organization lived through its finest hours, illustrated by the peace-keeping operations that won us the Nobel Prize in 1988; the accession of Namibia to independence; the end of the war between Iraq and Iran; the normalization of the situation in Afghanistan; the entry into force of the cease-fire in Western Sahara; the comprehensive political settlement in Cambodia; the mediation and observer missions in Nicaragua, Haiti, El Salvador and Angola; the role the United Nations played after the Gulf War; and, recently, the release of the hostages in Lebanon.

It is true that the questions of Cyprus, the Middle East and South Africa remain outstanding but we know the interest that he has in them and it is no mere chance that in Cyprus the parties there have renewed their commitment to continue their discussions; that the peace conference on the Middle East is in hand; and that, finally, a peace agreement has been signed between the parties concerned in South Africa to put an end to violence.

A tribute is due to the devotion of the Secretary-General, to his ability to look ahead and to act and particularly his concern to preserve the prestige and effectiveness of the Organization in all circumstances.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

It will not be said that the tribute that my delegation has just paid to the Secretary-General is intended to pass over in silence the questions of concern to our Organization, that is, the questions of political and economic security. However, before touching on that I wish to turn again to the situation in southern Africa.

We take note of the measures taken by the South African Government to dismantle the legal bases of apartheid while hoping for a more honest initiative to eradicate the very spirit that promoted the birth and maintenance of apartheid.

Within the United Nations we must define another strategy to speed up the process already started and shoulder our responsibilities in a specific manner for the advent of a new South Africa, a non-racial and democratic South Africa. So that the Organization may consistently struggle against apartheid, it must be there to guarantee and satisfy the aspirations of the majority; it must offer its good offices, mediation and even its arbitration to all parties to guarantee a political presence and in order to prevent the risk of a breakdown in the current negotiations.

That is the least we can do now that the role of the Organization in the maintenance of peace and international security has evolved in such a marked way. Because, by definition, the settlement of the situation in South Africa will have an influence on peace, regional security and cooperation - and my country is concerned in this - and also, by definition, the absence of this settlement will once again lead to threats to the peace and to international security.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

The era of bipolarization is over - it is now a mere historical curiosity in East-West relations - whereas North-South contradictions still exist despite protestations of solidarity and interdependence. Notwithstanding that, the vision of a more just world has not been abandoned. And in this inevitable transitional period, which is so full of promise and uncertainty, we recognize that public opinion is right to pin its hopes on our Organization, whose principles remain universally accepted and respected. This consensus has enabled us to make better and fuller use of the machinery envisaged in the Charter with regard to the maintenance of international peace and security.

However, we believe that many of the provisions relating to collective security have never been given optimal effect. We are thinking in particular of the opportunities offered by the Charter in the field of preventive diplomacy. Other not incompatible paths also deserve exploration - establishing a system of evaluation, prevention, management and solution of crises and conflicts, and providing the Secretary-General with a suitable structure. Such measures would, we believe, help to strengthen the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations.

Similarly, it is high time to provide the various peace-keeping operations with an official legal framework. Forged through practice, those operations have proved to be a new and more effective procedure, better adapted to present-day realities. This framework document would define their criteria and functions in order to forestall any violation of Charter purposes and principles to suit the special interests of an individual State or group of States. There will be no legitimate collective action without majority support, and we would be imperilling the democratic principle of our Organization were we, under cover of pragmatism or emergency, imprudently to

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

set aside universally acknowledged norms in favour of theories that are far from being unanimously accepted.

In order for our Organization to live up to the promises made to the peoples of the world, the following elements must be combined: the mandate of the principal organs must be re-examined, bearing in mind interdependence and the global nature of the problems dealt with; coordination among those bodies must be strengthened to ensure improved harmonization and greater cooperation; there must be a collective commitment to the Organization's restructuring. In any event, the active participation of all will help us better to meet the challenges - and I use that word advisedly - posed by the pressing need for democratization.

Thus revitalized, our Organization must commit itself as a matter of priority to preserving future generations from the scourge of war. Conditions have never been so propitious for achieving that purpose set out in the first words of the Charter. A military alliance has been dissolved, and Europe, meeting at Paris in November 1990, took concrete steps to reduce its immense concentration of armed forces. At the same time, the two nuclear super-Powers have begun destruction of types of weapons described in the various agreements in force; they have finally exchanged instruments of ratification for the threshold Treaty and the partial test-ban Treaty, and they have concluded the much-awaited Treaty on strategic arms limitation, the so-called START Treaty.

The initiative taken by President Bush on 27 September has now - and we welcome this - been added to the many disarmament proposals advanced by others. Clearly, a concerted and coherent approach is needed, for general and

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

complete disarmament under international control, which is the ultimate goal of all our efforts, can be brought about only within a multilateral context.

The Charter confers upon the United Nations a central role and a primary responsibility in the field of disarmament. Member States solemnly reaffirmed this in the Final Document of the first special session of the General Assembly devoted to disarmament. We must recreate the consensus we enjoyed then and again place our trust in the United Nations, which so recently demonstrated its ability in such complex areas of disarmament as the drawing up of a draft convention on chemical weapons, the Special Commission set up under Security Council resolution 687 (1991), and the embargoes established by the Security Council.

We often say that international security, if it is to be credible, must also extend to the economic field. I shall not go into all the problems of the developing countries or into the challenges they must face, nor shall I dwell on the responsibilities of the developed countries in this respect. We have discussed this here and in other forums, and I shall confine myself today to the case of Africa, which could also be that of other regions of the world.

The prime victim of the collapse of primary-commodity prices, crushed under the weight of foreign debt, suffering from major handicaps with regard to infrastructure, haunted by the spectre of famine, malnutrition and endemic disease, struck by various natural disasters - Africa has become the poorest region of the world, with a constantly increasing negative growth rate.

Aware of this situation, the United Nations adopted the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development. Five years after the adoption of that Programme of Action, its goals have not yet been attained. The response we were awaiting from the developed countries and international

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

economic and financial institutions has not been commensurate with their commitments, whereas the majority of African countries have agreed to make the reforms that were imposed on them - and I use the word "imposed" advisedly.

The economic, social and political costs of that operation have been high, and we shall continue to suffer from them without being able to set any limits. Yet Africa remains ready to renew its commitment to implement the needed transformational policies, as is evidenced, inter alia, in the adoption of the African Charter for the peoples' participation in development and the proposals put forward following the final evaluation of the Programme.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

But the new framework for cooperation must be able to guarantee us sufficient resources, reduction and cancellation of debt, and adoption of lasting solutions to the problem of commodities, all in the hope that the pact thus concluded will enjoy the real support of Africa's partners.

But Africa is not the only continent in the third world, and it is our duty to echo the concerns felt in other regions with regard to our collective participation in world economic management.

We speak of the globalization of the world economy, while what we are witnessing is fragmentation among the various interested parties, skewed methods of resolving key issues, a regionalization of economic activities among the industrialized countries and a weakening of discipline in financial, monetary and trade policies. Such a situation is not conducive to any new policy one might want to institute on a world-wide scale and prevents us from resolving problems inherited from a system that is being carefully kept in obsolescence in order to draw iniquitous profits from it.

Thus, despite the various initiatives and proposals, some of which have begun to be implemented and which may be useful for future reference, the foreign-debt crisis only gets worse. In order to resolve this crisis we need an international debt strategy containing long-term relief measures and greater debt-reduction compatible with the debtor countries' real ability to pay, taking into account their growth prospects and development. Thus, to free us from the constraints resulting from successive reschedulings, we reiterate the appeal for a fundamental readaptation of the existing mechanisms.

Similarly, the resources available to finance development, already inadequate, are in effect being diverted in order to satisfy other needs born

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

of the integration of the Eastern European countries or the rebuilding of countries the victims of the Gulf war.

That is why we support the idea of convening an international conference on development financing, because it is time to consider all initiatives on ways to release additional resources and to take steps to allocate to development a reasonable portion of the "peace dividend", estimated at almost $120 billion a year.

In addition, we are convinced that the protection of the environment, far from being a marginal activity, must be considered an integral part of any development effort, with the support of the international community. Any solution proposed in this area must preserve our development priorities and guarantee the principle of proportionality as regards contributions and responsibility.

The complexity of the problems I have mentioned requires that multilateral economic cooperation be strengthened: North-South, South-South and sub-regional cooperation, such as what we are already doing in the framework of the Committee on the Indian Ocean, which is to regroup the islands in the south-western part of that Ocean. The Declaration adopted by the General Assembly at its eighteenth special session and the new international strategy for development are the logical framework for such action.

It is appropriate, then, to strengthen the capacity of the United Nations to deal effectively with all economic problems. A role of coordination and orientation should be given to the Economic and Social Council, which in future should be called the "Council for Economic Security" if we wish to see more just and equitable economic relations.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

On hearing and reading the words of the heads of delegation that preceded me, I believe that there might be a consensus on the ideas of peace, progress and social justice, on the role of the United Nations in promoting these principles, and on equal, universal participation in international relations. It could not be otherwise, in fact, because we are condemned to our dreams - that is to say, to hope that there will be no more ideological confrontation, that solidarity will stave off any risk of domination and hegemony and that all nations will enjoy an equal right to well-being and security.

Forty-six years ago the problem was posed in the same terms. Peoples were given to understand - peoples whose aspirations have scarcely changed - that it sufficed to respect the principles of the Charter and to seek to achieve its stated objectives to guarantee the advent of a new era. We know what the situation is, and it is not appropriate for me to return to the recriminations resulting from injustices of all kinds. However, the new era that has been so widely proclaimed continues to be a Utopian ideal; we are still awaiting it.

It is not normal that from one decade to the next we blindly advocate a new order. It is not normal either for us to hide behind the universality of Charter principles to proclaim its inviolability. Nor is it normal that in a world committed to pragmatism we refuse to draw conclusions from the political, economic and social upheavals that affect all societies without differentiation. In short, we need a new Charter!

A shocking conclusion to be sure, but let us recognize that in the end the revision of our Charter, in particular Chapters VII to XIII, will be only a temporary measure, soon to be overtaken by events. We do not intend to open a discussion on this subject at this stage, but we call on all members to give serious thought to this possibility and to start the necessary consultations.

(Mr. Rabenoro, Madagascar)

This will be a long endeavour, but let us be like the medieval cathedral-builders of Europe, always inspired by unfaltering faith.

Before I conclude and before I thank my distinguished audience, I should like to quote two Malagasy proverbs appropriate to our circumstances: "Crossing a long plain gives one time to meditate"; and "A house is built by several people, not by just one individual".

Mr. GYAW (Myanmar): May I begin, Sir, by offering you the warmest congratulations of the delegation of the Union of Myanmar on your most deserving election to the presidency of the forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Allow me also to express our admiration for the able manner in which you have been leading the deliberations of this body since the beginning of the session, and our full confidence that under your wise and dynamic leadership every success will attend the work of the session.

In addition, I wish to pay tribute to Mr. Guido de Marco, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Malta, for his commendable and invaluable contribution to the success of the forty-fifth session of the General Assembly.

Our high tribute and deep appreciation go to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, too, for his tireless efforts, his dedication to the ideals and aims of the United Nations, his courageous and far-sighted peace initiatives and, above all, his vital contribution in restoring the credibility and effectiveness of the United Nations at this critical juncture in the history of the Organization.

Universality of membership is a cherished goal of our Organization - an objective which Myanmar has always supported. We are therefore pleased to see seven new Members in our midst.

Two among the new members, the Republic of Korea and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, have been with us for many years as Observer States. We are pleased to see them assume their rightful place as full Members. The Republic of Korea is a country with which Myanmar has established a long and fruitful relationship of friendship, understanding and cooperation, and I am therefore most delighted to welcome it to our midst. We are confident that, given the evolving international climate, the simultaneous

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

admission of the two Korean States will promote rather than hinder their eventual peaceful reunification.

We are also pleased to see in our ranks two other fellow-Asian States, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands. Their decision to join our Organization signifies their resolve to take full charge of their own destiny as independent sovereign States.

The assumption of their rightful place among us by the three Baltic States - the Republic of Estonia, the Republic of Latvia and the Republic of Lithuania - carries a special significance because it represents the righting of a historical wrong perpetrated in violation of international law. Equally significant is the manner in which this was accomplished. If I may borrow from the statement made by the President of the Security Council on 12 September 1991 on behalf of the members of the Council, the independence of these three States:

> "... was restored peacefully, by means of dialogue, with the consent of the parties concerned, and in accordance with the wishes and aspirations of the three peoples". (S/PV.3007, p. 4-5)

The threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State is totally outlawed by the Charter. So is the threat or use of force in any other manner, save in conformity with the provisions of Article 51 and Chapter VII. Acts of aggression, or other breaches of the peace, whenever, wherever or by whomsoever committed, must be decisively suppressed. It is therefore a matter for satisfaction that the Security Council, freed at last from its decades-long paralysis, took resolute action to terminate Iraq's aggression against Kuwait, and thereby succeeded in upholding intact one of the principal aims of the Charter. The entire world

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

rejoiced at the liberation of Kuwait from Iraqi occupation and the restoration of the status quo ante in that country.

While the legitimacy of the objective of Security Council decisions in the matter is unquestionable, certain aspects of those decisions and the manner in which they were interpreted and implemented not only during the war but also in its aftermath have confronted the international community with many troubling questions. The Secretary-General has laid these questions plainly before the Member States in chapter IV of his annual report. The Council's decision authorizing the use of force on a national and coalition basis, which clearly does not conform with the mechanism and procedures for enforcement action envisaged in Chapter VII; the apparent lack of proportionality in the employment of armed force; the want of full compliance with the rules of humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts; the over-extension of the application of Chapter VII measures; the continued enforcement of some of these measures long after the end of hostilities which has caused grievous suffering to innocent civilian populations - these are among the questions which must be urgently addressed not only by the Security Council but also by the General Assembly in exercise of its authority under Article 11 of the Charter.

The peculiar phenomenon of the cold war which took hold in the wake of the universal rejoicing and euphoria occasioned by the end of the Second World War has now been declared over. Thus, an unhappy chapter in human history, which was also the most perilous, has come to a close. Mankind, which for over forty-five agonizing years has been living under the sinister shadow of the atom bomb, has been liberated from the ever-present and pervasive threat of total and instant annihilation. The nations of the world have now within

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

their grasp a God-sent opportunity to fashion a new international order in the image of the Charter - a new order of peace, freedom, justice and cooperation, where the rule of law, not the rule of might, prevails; an order where both men and nations are freed from the crushing scourges of want, hunger, disease and ignorance that have afflicted mankind through the ages.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

The end of an old era does not necessarily mean the dawn of a new and better one, and the transition from the one to the other can be neither smooth nor painless. It can be accomplished only through the conscious and dynamic pursuit of enlightened, responsible and statesman-like policies by all nations, particularly by those that have the power to influence and shape events - for good or for bad, for better or for worse. In today's changing and turbulent world it is doubly incumbent on such countries to exercise their great power with prudence and in strict conformity with international law. Power entails responsibility, and the greater the power the higher is the responsibility to act, and to be seen to act, with justice and within the law. Power divorced from responsibility and exercised outside the law - be it at the global or at the regional level - will inevitably lead to an international regime of diktat and anarchy.

The Charter of the United Nations lays down the legal norms of responsible international behaviour and provides the institutional framework for just the kind of international order that not only nations but countless millions of common men and women in all corners of the globe have so long yearned for and so long been denied. Nothing that has happened since the watershed year of 1985, when events that will surely go down in history as marking the beginning of the end of the cold war first manifested themselves, requires a modification of the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter. Indeed, if anything has become plain from the rapid evolution of international affairs it is that the paramount law of the Charter must be upheld as inviolate and must be scrupulously respected in every sphere of intercourse between nations if today's promise is not to become tomorrow's bad dream. As the Secretary-General reminds us in the opening section of his

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

annual report of 1991,

"... the concern that the principles of its Charter should govern the emerging international order continues and is accentuated by all current developments". (A/46/1, p.2)

Among the developments that are causing serious concern and anxiety, particularly among the small and the weak, are moralistic stances that, in truth, conceal attempts to modify the time-honoured concept of sovereignty and to erode certain cardinal principles of the Charter, such as the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, the principle of respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of States, and the principle of the sovereign equality of States.

One sphere where such attempts are becoming increasingly manifest is that of the promotion of human rights. We in Myanmar accept the rule that once legal norms pertaining to human rights are universally recognized as general principles of international law they become binding on all States. Indeed, we are adhering to such norms in good faith. To the fullest extent permitted by our own national circumstances - not least among which is the continued existence of armed insurrection in remote parts of the country and the destructive activities of underground elements in urban and rural areas - we are doing our utmost to promote and protect fundamental human rights in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The Myanmar Government's policy of cooperating with the United Nations Commission on Human Rights is well known to members of that Commission. Not only have we been providing comprehensive and factual replies to inquiries and communications of the Commission, received through the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, but

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

we have welcomed the visit to our country of an independent expert appointed by the Commission. We intend to continue such cooperation on the basis of the principles underlying the United Nations human-rights mechanism - namely, objectivity, fair-play, good faith and good will.

However, a clear line must be drawn between, on one hand, the internationally binding character of the norms I have mentioned and, on the other hand, the modality of their implementation by Member States in their own countries. The modality of implementation is the primary responsibility of Member States, to be formulated by each according to its own best judgement, in keeping with its own local conditions. In this respect, the United Nations and its subsidiary bodies can best play a supportive role. Here the wise words of caution expressed by the Secretary-General in his latest annual report must be well heeded. Speaking of human-rights violations carried out in a systematic fashion and on a scale massive in terms of both time and place, the Secretary-General says:

> "It seems to be beyond question that violations of human rights imperil peace, while disregard of the sovereignty of States would spell chaos. The maximum caution needs to be exercised lest the defence of human rights becomes a platform for encroaching on the essential domestic jurisdiction of States and eroding their sovereignty. Nothing would be a surer prescription for anarchy than an abuse of this principle."
> (A/46/1, p. 10)

As a South-East Asian nation, Myanmar is highly gratified that fighting has ceased in neighbouring Cambodia and that an end to the pain and suffering endured by the Cambodian people over the past 12 years is now in sight. The successful formation of the Supreme National Council, with His Royal Highness

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

Samdech Norodom Sihanouk as its President, and the subsequent Pattaya and New York agreements reached between the Cambodian parties represent significant progress towards implementation of the framework for a comprehensive political settlement in Cambodia, endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 668 (1990) of 20 September 1990.

We fervently hope that all parties concerned will pursue the process with renewed vigour, so that a comprehensive peace agreement may be finalized and concluded without delay.

The situation in the Middle East remains highly volatile. The Gulf War served as a frightening reminder of the potential for a wider, more devastating conflict in the region. My delegation continues to hold that a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region can be achieved only by faithful application of Security Council resolutions 242 (1967) and 338 (1973) in their entirety. This requires, above all, recognition of the legitimate national rights of the Palestinian people, including their inalienable right to self-determination and to the establishment of their own independent and sovereign State, side by side with recognition of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and political independence of all States in the region, including Israel. My delegation further believes that an international peace conference on the Middle East, held under United Nations auspices and with the participation, on an equal footing throughout all its phases, of all parties concerned, remains the best means of achieving the kind of peace I have mentioned. We earnestly hope that the diplomatic initiatives that were intensified in the aftermath of the Gulf War will lead to agreement on the early convening of such a conference.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

We have followed with great concern developments in South Africa, where the black majority continues to make tremendous sacrifices in order to free itself from the scourge of apartheid. While steps such as the repeal of the Group Areas Act and the Lands Act, the repeal of the Population Registration Act and the promise of President De Klerk to remove the remaining pillars of apartheid are positive, it is disappointing that, almost two years after the adoption of the United Nations consensus Declaration on apartheid, the political process towards the elimination of the abhorrent system is still at a very early stage.

We are happy to note that, as a result of the courage and political vision of the black leadership, the parties concerned reached agreement on 14 September 1991 to put an end to the communal violence that has engulfed South Africa for so long.*

---

* Mr. Cheaka (Togo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

There is today a historic opportunity for the establishment of a democratic society in South Africa, united and free from apartheid and all forms of racial discrimination. We must not let the opportunity slip away. It is imperative that the international community, while applauding the constructive developments there, continue to maintain the necessary pressure until the evil system is totally eradicated.

The new climate of growing confidence and cooperation between the two super-Powers presents us with an opportunity to intensify efforts that would result in meaningful agreements in all fields of disarmament, particularly in the field of nuclear, chemical and other weapons of mass destruction.

In the nuclear field, the package of measures announced by President Bush last Friday has given a further boost to the momentum generated by the 1987 Treaty on the Elimination of Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles (INF Treaty) and the 1991 START agreement. What is perhaps more significant than the numbers and types of weapons involved is what seems to be a clean break with the philosophical approach to arms control and disarmament which the United States pursued during the cold-war era. A positive Soviet response, both in kind and in spirit, to the unilateral United States initiative could, in our view, set in train a self-generating process that would eventually lead to the elimination of all types of nuclear weapons in the armouries of all nuclear-weapon States.

As we enter the decade of the 1990s, little has changed in the economic circumstances of the developing countries. In the midst of plenty, the vast majority of developing countries still find themselves in a state of abject poverty. While world trade has shown healthy growth, the same cannot be said of the foreign trade of developing countries, and while foreign direct

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

investment quadrupled in the last decade, very little of it flowed to the developing countries. The absolute level of official financial flows to the developing countries remains stagnant in real terms.

The international trading system continues to be threatened by growing protectionism and increased tendencies towards managed trade, and frequent recourse to unilateral measures which contravene the basic principles of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). The developing countries are faced with protectionist measures in developed market economies affecting the very sectors where developing countries have a distinct comparative advantage in international competitiveness.

The debt crisis, far from being over, has increased in magnitude and intensity. Although a few middle-income debtor countries have achieved a measure of progress, the most heavily indebted countries continue to face enormous difficulties. The total amount of external debt of capital-importing countries has now reached the staggering sum of $1.4 trillion.

Resolving the debt crisis is central to the reactivation of growth and development in the developing countries. The solution to the problem of external indebtedness must of necessity include debt and debt-servicing reduction as a central element. While recent initiatives do provide limited scope for debt relief, a durable solution to the problem will require bolder approaches.

That over a billion people now live in absolute poverty is not only immoral: it also poses a real threat to international security and stability. Creation of an international economic environment conducive to growth and development of the developing countries is therefore an imperative

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

for the world community. Unless and until this is achieved, the chasm that divides the North from the South will grow even wider.*

In less than a year the nations of the world will gather in Brazil for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. The outcome of the summit Conference, the first of its kind ever to be formally mandated by the General Assembly, will have a most significant bearing on the future of mankind. The actual and potential threats posed by environmental degradation and deterioration are such that unless timely action is taken at the global, regional and national levels the very survival of the human race is at stake.

What is required is a willingness on the part of all nations, developed and developing, to work together in cooperation and in concert so that the threat to the environment can be overcome. The wide spectrum of issues that need to be addressed include the unsustainable pattern of production and consumption, new and additional sources of funding for the developing countries to enable them to cope with environmental problems, and development of and agreement on technological transfers.

The environment occupies a place of pride in our national priorities. Allow me, therefore, to apprise the Assembly of the endeavours of my country in the field of environmental protection. Myanmar has great biodiversity, in flora as well as fauna. We regard them as a national heritage to be protected and conserved for future generations. Accordingly, environmental considerations have consistently been taken into account in our socio-economic planning and implementation.

---

* The President returned to the Chair.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

Myanmar's abundant forests, a resource of considerable economic value, have been managed on a rational and sustainable basis. To accomplish this the Government has been implementing a series of five-year forest plans. Central to this is the time-tested method of environmentally sound timber extraction commonly known as the Myanmar selection system. This is complemented by a significant reforestation programme, carried out by the Forest Department as well as by the public at large. The sixth five-year plan, for the period 1992 to 1996, envisages a five-fold increase in the area of natural forest reserves.

The setting up of the National Commission for Environmental Affairs in February 1990 has also enabled Myanmar to enhance its environmental endeavours both nationally and internationally. The National Commission, which has jurisdiction over all environmental matters, coordinates the environmental efforts of various ministries and departments. It also acts as a national focal point for environmental matters vis-à-vis other countries and international organizations.

The Union of Myanmar is stepping up its campaign against drug abuse - which has become the foremost social problem in the world today - at the national, bilateral and international levels.

At the national level, the Myanmar authorities, during 1991, in continuation of their narcotic-drugs-supply-reduction activities, conducted a public destruction of narcotic drugs in Yangon on 1 July. Earlier in the year, at a series of special occasions attended by diplomats and military attachés accredited to Myanmar, representatives of various United Nations agencies and of the United States Drug Enforcement Administration, and the international media, 1,500 acres of poppy fields together with four drug

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

refineries and large quantities of narcotic drugs and drug-producing paraphernalia were destroyed on site. The total value of drug refineries, paraphernalia, narcotic drugs and poppy fields destroyed in public from 1990 to date is approximately $4.33 billion. Drug-supply-reduction activities being carried out in my country also include destruction of poppy fields: between 1975 and 1991 over 200,000 acres of poppy fields, with a potential annual yield of 940 tonnes of opium, were destroyed.

The magnitude of Myanmar's contribution to the international campaign against narcotic drugs cannot be measured in monetary terms alone. In terms of lives saved and of human misery and social problems averted in drug-affected foreign countries, the magnitude of our contribution is immeasurably higher and cannot, indeed, be quantified.

A novel approach that we have adopted as an integral part of the comprehensive campaign against drug abuse has been to win the hearts and minds of the local populace in the poppy-growing areas and to secure their willing and wholehearted cooperation in achieving the total eradication of poppy cultivation. Significant results have already been achieved in this respect also. The programme for the development of border areas and national races therein that is now being implemented is fully supportive of our national anti-drug campaign efforts, and we believe that the programme will contribute effectively to the total and early eradication of poppy cultivation.*

---

* Mr. Cheaka (Togo), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

At the bilateral level, our active cooperation with neighbouring countries in drug-abuse control is making significant headway. Following two rounds of discussion in which representatives of the United Nations International Drug Control Programme participated, an agreement for Myanmar-Thailand cooperation on a wide range of anti-narcotics activities was signed by representatives of the two Governments in March this year. Later, in May, a similar agreement was entered into with China on the conclusion of high-level discussions held in Beijing in which the representatives of the Myanmar and Chinese Governments and the Executive Director of the United Nations Drug Control Programme took part. In September talks were initiated in Yangon between Myanmar and Laotian representatives on matters relating to bilateral cooperation in drug-abuse control. These will be continued in Vientiane in the near future. As these bilateral arrangements for cooperation progress and become increasingly concretized, we hope to raise them to the subregional level involving all four countries and covering the crucial Golden Triangle area as well as all areas contiguous to it.

At the international level, Myanmar's accession to the 1988 United Nations Convention against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances marks an important milestone in the history of our endeavours to combat the menace of illicit drugs, and our participation in the international campaign against this horrible scourge.

With all these concrete measures and tangible results behind us and with definite future plans effectively to eradicate the drug menace, we in Myanmar are confident that we shall in the near future win a resounding and decisive victory in our war on illicit drugs. In so doing, we hope that Myanmar will be able to make a significant contribution to the success of the world-wide

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

efforts to combat the scourge of illicit drugs, rendering an invaluable service to mankind.

Just as the world stands at the crossroads of change and transformation, we in Myanmar find ourselves on the threshold of a new era. At this important juncture, the Government of Myanmar is undertaking a wide range of endeavours to usher in a process leading to peace and prosperity and the fulfilment of the aspirations of the people to a democratic State. In the past year, significant progress has been made in restoring law and order throughout the country and in laying the foundations for a democratic State. That all schools, colleges, universities and other institutions of higher learning have now been reopened attests to the return to normality in the entire country. Complete freedom of religion continues to be promoted in the country. With the active support of the Government, religious groups of diverse faiths are flourishing as never before, which gives the lie to the fallacious allegations being spread by certain quarters with ulterior motives. An unprecedented event, which contributes to consolidating stability in the country, has been the return to the legal fold of eight insurgent groups. Having renounced the path of violence, they have now joined hands with the Government and the people to transform their respective areas into thriving and prosperous communities. For the first time in decades, guns have fallen silent and peace and tranquillity now prevail in remote areas of the country where terror and lawlessness previously reigned.

Questions have been raised in some quarters about the perceived delay in the transfer of power. Some have even gone so far as to assert that the Myanmar Government has shown no sign of respecting the wishes of the people. Without prejudice to the firmly held position of my Government that the

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

political process now under way in the country is a matter falling essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of my country - a principle clearly enshrined in the Charter - I should like to apprise the Assembly of the facts.

Two months after the successful holding of multi-party elections in May 1990, which were recognized by all as the most free and fair elections in the history of Myanmar, the State Law and Order Restoration Council on 27 July 1990 issued Declaration 1/90 setting forth a post-election programme. All political parties have agreed to abide by the programme.

The Election Commission, which is an independent body, issued two progress reports this year in which it indicated that it was continuing with its task of concluding a final report in accordance with the Election Law and the election rules and that the scrutiny of the financial returns of the candidates could not proceed at a more rapid rate owing to the failure of candidates to maintain accounts systematically. In accordance with the election law, a number of candidates have contested the results, and tribunals have been set up to investigate the objections. This due process of law must be allowed to complete its course.

Once the Election Commission has submitted its final report, the State Law and Order Restoration Council will meet with the elected representatives to discuss the holding of a national convention. The convention will be entrusted with the task of working out a broad national consensus, which will form the basis for framing a new constitution. In addition to the elected representatives, leaders of political parties, leaders and representatives of all national races and respected veteran politicians will participate in the convention.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

On the basis of the national consensus arrived at at the convention, the elected representatives will draw up a new constitution. The State Law and Order Restoration Council, in the best traditions of the Myanmar Defence Services, will make suggestions and render all necessary assistance for the successful drafting and adoption of an enduring constitution. The State Law and Order Restoration Council is above party politics. It is not a political organization nor does it have any intention of forming one. It will continue to shoulder its responsibility to lead the nation until the time a strong government can be formed on the basis of the new constitution.

Undoubtedly, a strong and enduring constitution is a prerequisite for a strong and stable government, the more so in Myanmar because of its historical experiences. The first Constitution, drawn up in 1947 while Myanmar was still under British colonial rule, had flaws and shortcomings. In the early 1960s, a few politicians with secessionist ambitions attempted to take advantage of them. As a result the country was brought to the brink of disintegration in 1962 and the Defence Services were compelled to step in to save it.

The second Constitution was promulgated in 1974, during the time of the one-party socialist system. The entire people took part in the thorough and systematic process, which lasted over two years. The final text was adopted in a nation-wide referendum on 3 January 1974 by an overwhelming vote of 90.19 per cent. Notwithstanding this, the Constitution was short-lived and was rendered inoperative in 1988, when, in response to the aspirations of the people, the State Law and Order Restoration Council abolished the single-party system and introduced a multi-party democratic system.

In the light of these experiences, it goes without saying that the new constitution now being contemplated should be a living instrument reflecting the hopes and aspirations of this generation as well as generations to come.

(Mr. Gyaw, Myanmar)

At this critical stage in the life of my country, the constitutional process is an undertaking to be pursued in a peaceful, systematic and orderly manner. It is a task that can be best accomplished by the people of Myanmar itself at a pace and in a manner best suited to the conditions of the country.

In conclusion I should like to state categorically that, once the political process I have outlined is completed, the State Law and Order Restoration Council will transfer the reins of the State to a strong and stable government formed in accordance with the new constitution.*

---

* The President returned to the Chair.

ADDRESS BY GENERAL IBRAHIM BABANGIDA, PRESIDENT AND COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF OF THE ARMED FORCES OF THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF NIGERIA

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): The Assembly will now hear an address by the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

General Ibrahim Babangida, President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted into the General Assembly Hall.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly, I have the honour to welcome to the United Nations the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency General Ibrahim Babangida, and to invite him to address the Assembly.

President BABANGIDA: It is a great honour for me to address this Assembly, both as President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and as the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity (OAU). In those capacities, Sir, may I congratulate you on your election as President of this forty-sixth session of the General Assembly. Your election is undoubtedly a great tribute to your talents and a recognition of the contributions of your country to furthering the ideals of the United Nations. I am confident that under your able guidance the deliberations of this session will be brought to a fruitful conclusion.

I wish also to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco of Malta, for the able manner in which he conducted the affairs of the last session.

(President Babangida)

I would like to express my profound appreciation to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, who for the past 10 years has put his sterling qualities at the service of our Organization. His outstanding contributions as an advocate of peace and his support for the cause of the underprivileged have endeared him to the international community. As his term of office draws to a close, I wish him good luck in his future endeavours.

From a membership of 51 in 1945, the United Nations has grown to an Organization of 166 States with the admission at this session of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, the Republic of Korea, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and the Republics of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania. I join in the welcome that has been extended to them.

In the four and a half decades of the existence of the United Nations, the prospects for building a safe and secure world for all mankind have never been brighter. The end of the cold war, the dramatic changes in Eastern Europe, the encouraging agreements concluded by the United States and the Soviet Union in the field of nuclear disarmament coupled with the latest unilateral measures announced by President George Bush, the progress achieved in the resolution of regional conflicts and the growing convergence of views on democratization and its linkage with development have all combined to create a climate more conducive to genuine international cooperation.

The challenge to the international community, therefore, is to seize this opportunity to establish a new world order in which the United Nations will be the instrument for the promotion and maintenance of international peace and security, for the harmonization of the interests of all States and for the

(President Babangida)

promotion of global prosperity. This new world order must be collectively defined, collectively designed and collectively defended.

Africa, like other parts of the world, is adjusting to recent dramatic global developments. Our peoples are taking a critical look at the conduct of politics and the changes necessary to bring about stability, security and development. For that reason, the issues of democratization, of human rights and of popular participation in political and economic processes have assumed important dimensions in the deliberations of the OAU.

In June 1991, the OAU, at its summit meeting in Abuja, the new Nigerian capital, deliberated again on these issues. The summit resolved that African countries should fully embrace the democratic culture in order to enable our peoples to enjoy fundamental human rights and participate effectively in decisions that affect their lives and their well-being. Naturally, models of democratization must vary and must take into account differing cultures and other environmental factors. Each country is therefore evolving its variant of democracy at a different pace of development.

In Nigeria, for example, the Transition to Civil Rule Programme is a carefully phased process in which democratic government is expected to proceed with political learning, institutional adjustment and the reorientation of political culture.

(President Babangida)

By the end of 1992, we will have held elections to all tiers of Government and completed the transition programme that was launched in 1986. Other approaches to democratization, especially the National Conference variety, have entailed the rapid displacement of incumbent managers of State by transitional leaders who, in turn, will commence the process of transition.

Economic development nurtures democracy. However, underdevelopment is a threat and obstacle to democracy. We commend the peoples of Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union for their decision to build democratic societies. We also note the significant financial and economic assistance that the Western industrialized countries and Japan have decided to offer them. This is in direct contrast to the virtual neglect of African efforts. If this neglect and this indifference continue, disillusionment may arise with democracy in the face of persistent and extreme economic hardship.

Aware of this inter-relationship between democracy and development, many countries in Africa are pursuing economic reform side by side with the restructuring of the political processes. Self-reliance is the cornerstone of our new thinking on economic reform. At the individual country level, we have embarked upon structural adjustment programmes designed to liberalize our economies. Through deregulation, we expect the private sector to play the leading role in revitalizing our economies. At the continental level, at our summit meeting, held in Abuja last June, we adopted the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community, with the objective of creating an integrated common market. Our goal is a fully developed Africa, able to feed itself, capable of being the engine of its own growth and able to participate actively in the world economic system.

Structural adjustment in Africa, without a conducive international

(President Babangida)

environment, seems incapable of turning our economy around and ensuring the stability of our polity. It must be said that Africa's efforts have not received the requisite international support.

May I recall that in June 1986 the United Nations adopted the Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and Development, which covered the period from 1986 to 1990. A review of the Programme showed that its implementation was most unsatisfactory. Hence, the overall performance of the African economy since 1986 has been dismal. The reasons can be attributed mainly to the debt burden, the collapse of commodity prices, the low levels of resource flows from the developed countries, as well as natural calamities.

Disappointed by the poor performance of the Programme of Action, African countries decided to present a New Agenda of Action for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, rather than approach the international community for a second programme of action. The Agenda envisages that the African gross domestic product as a whole must grow by at least 6 per cent per annum in real terms in order to enable the continent to double per capita income by the year 2015. This level of growth will require $30 billion in resources during 1992.

We expect that the international community, in cooperation with Africa, will now strive to see that the New Agenda is implemented in accordance with Africa's needs and aspirations. The international community must accept the principle of shared responsibility and full partnership with Africa, and firmly commit itself to giving far more support than it did during the period from 1986 to date. Africa is not, and should not, be made an irrelevant variable in the world development equation. The United Nations must play a decisive role in Africa's quest and determination to overcome its stalled development.

(President Babangida)

May I emphasize that Africa's indebtedness is the single major obstacle to development in the continent. The debt problem is a central element of Africa's critical economic situation. Africa's debt is crippling. The realities are as startling as they are depressing. Africa's total debt equals 102.3 per cent of its gross national product and more than 300 per cent of its total exports. On average, 30 per cent of the continent's export earnings is used to service debt. For the least developed countries, the percentage is more than double the average. We cannot continue in this way.

There is an urgent need for political dialogue between the creditor nations and the debtor nations on the debt crisis. Let us consider the idea of debt forgiveness for credible and sustained structural adjustment programmes. Let us consider the idea of debt forgiveness for credible environmental protection programmes. Let us consider the idea of debt forgiveness for credible democratization processes.

Beyond the issue of debt, what Africa needs is a special financial package, a kind of Marshall Plan, which would demonstrate the sincerity of the developed world for the plight of Africa, right historical wrongs and set the world on the path of a new order that is just and equitable.

In recent times, the world has been concerned about such major environmental problems as the depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, acid rain and hazardous and toxic waste dumping. Africa's environmental problems of drought, deforestation, desertification and erosion are no less severe than the environmental problems of industrialized countries. We have, within our limited resources, made efforts to contain environmental degradation which, in the developing countries, is closely linked to poverty and underdevelopment. The promotion of economic and social development,

(President Babangida)

therefore, constitutes an essential factor in the protection of the environment.

As we look forward to the forthcoming United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, we urge the international community to commit itself fully to the pursuit of environmentally sound technology, which will be available to all countries. In order to fulfil that commitment, the Conference should set up an international mechanism to implement a truly global programme of action. Such a programme should embrace all aspects of the threat to the environment, without prejudice to the development aspirations of Africa and other developing regions.

(President Babangida)

The positive and dramatic changes in the world have facilitated the resolution of some regional conflicts. We are however concerned that a number of other conflicts, the continuation of which threatens international peace and security, remain unresolved. We urge all countries concerned to avail themselves of the present international climate to seek peaceful solutions to their disputes under the aegis of the United Nations and of their regional organizations.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) continues to seek ways to improve its machinery for resolving African conflicts and for bringing enduring peace to our continent. Currently we are seeking solutions to the conflicts in the Sudan, Somalia and Rwanda. As Chairman of the OAU I am personally engaged in these processes.

At the subregional level, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) continues to be actively involved, at great cost to its members, in helping the people of Liberia bring peace to their country. A special ECOWAS committee was established in July to take a fresh look at ways and means of advancing the peace process in Liberia. We are gratified that agreement was reached by all parties to the conflict to encamp and disarm the warring factions and to establish an electoral commission to conduct legislative and presidential elections.

I want to use the privilege of this occasion once again to appeal to our brothers in Africa to bury the hatchet and seek a peaceful settlement of the problems that have torn them and their countries apart.

This Assembly has, for over 30 years, supported the aspirations of the people of southern Africa for the establishment of a non-racial democratic society. In line with that position the Assembly declared apartheid a crime

(President Babangida)

against humanity and proceeded to recommend the imposition of sanctions on the South African regime. These years of international pressure, and the struggle of the people of southern Africa, have had a great impact on the thinking and, consequently, the policies of the Government of South Africa.

At the last OAU Summit we took cognizance of the positive changes that had taken place in that country. We welcomed them. The United Nations must take great satisfaction and pride in its own significant contribution to bringing about the changes. Lovers of freedom and all those who suffered, all those who are still suffering, and those who paid the supreme sacrifice must be commended on the progress made towards the dawn of a new order in southern Africa.

South Africa has yet to arrive at the final destination. The international community must, therefore, remain vigilant until the goals of freedom, justice and a non-racial and democratic society are achieved in South Africa.

We note the effort to stamp out communal violence resulting in the meeting which took place in Johannesburg on 14 September 1991, during which a national peace accord was signed by the African National Congress, the Inkatha Freedom Party and the National Party. We commend all those responsible for this agreement.

We recognize that cooperation between a new South Africa and other African countries with the requisite potential can act as a catalyst for economic growth and development. Africa is prepared to welcome a new, non-racial and democratic South Africa as a respectable member of the comity of nations and to establish normal and fruitful relations with it.

(President Babangida)

More than at any time in the past the Middle East is now on the threshold of a major peace effort. Recent developments, particularly the agreement to convene a peace conference, have indeed strengthened our conviction that the road to peace in the region is through negotiation and not war. We congratulate all those who are working tirelessly for the convening of the peace conference. It behoves all parties to the conflict to demonstrate their desire for peace. We therefore appeal to them to spare no effort in order to arrive at a just and durable solution that will guarantee peaceful coexistence in the region.

During the Gulf War, the world was gripped with fear over the possible use of chemical weapons. We in Africa have always emphasized that nations should not only forswear the use of these weapons, as stipulated in the 1925 Geneva Protocol, but also support the complete prohibition of their development, production and stockpiling, as well as their elimination from the arsenals of those who possess them. We therefore call for the urgent conclusion of the chemical weapons convention.

We note with satisfaction the agreement reached so far between the United States and the Soviet Union in the field of nuclear disarmament. We congratulate President George Bush on the far-reaching initiatives he announced a few days ago and we equally welcome the prompt response by President Mikhail Gorbachev. These acts of statesmanship represent a significant milestone in efforts to avert a nuclear catastrophe.

We in Africa have taken concrete steps in the pursuit of our long-standing Declaration to make our continent a nuclear-weapon-free zone. Africa is equally concerned about the increasing proliferation of conventional weapons. Given their destructive capacity, their threat to international

(President Babangida)

peace and security and the enormous human and financial drain they constitute to all nations, especially the developing countries, the international community should begin in earnest to address the question of the arms race in conventional weapons in a constructive and non-discriminatory manner.

In a few years' time, the United Nations will mark its golden jubilee. In the four and a half decades of its existence it has provided the forum for defusing tensions through dialogue, even where it could not resolve the issues. It has been the catalyst for the ending of colonialism and for the realization of the fundamental rights of peoples to self-determination and independence.

The United Nations Charter embodies principles that are fundamental to the achievement of peace. It is our duty, therefore, to strengthen the Organization. In doing so we must strive to adapt its major organs to the realities of today and to the demands of tomorrow.

It is time to address in a very serious manner the composition of the Security Council. It is one major organ of the United Nations that needs to be democratized. Its membership of 15 has become inadequate in view of the expanded membership of the United Nations since 1965 when the Security Council was last enlarged. The limitation of the permanent membership to the present five has become both anachronistic and unrepresentative.

The logic of democracy cannot be confined within the borders of individual States, but must, of necessity, be applicable to the operation of international organizations. It is therefore our considered opinion that there is need to expand the membership of the Security Council and to admit additional permanent members representing all the regions of the world.

(President Babangida)

The deep commitment of African States to the United Nations has been demonstrated over the years. As a further mark of that commitment the Organization of African Unity has presented a list of distinguished candidates for consideration to serve the Organization in the capacity of Secretary-General. Africa's case for the office has been misinterpreted to mean special pleading. Our case is based on competence and justice. Africa is set to give the world its best in the pursuit of the lofty goals that informed the establishment of the United Nations. Africa therefore calls upon the rest of the world to apply a proper sense of justice in considering the appointment of a new United Nations Secretary-General. We strongly believe that the next Secretary-General should be an African.

For us in Africa, a new world order should give primacy to the United Nations, which should be revitalized to fulfil its mandate under the Charter as the principal instrument for the maintenance of international peace and security. It should be a forum for harmonizing the interests of the strong and the weak. All countries must recognize the universal applicability of international law because the future of humanity ultimately depends on that recognition.

In addition, for the new world order to be truly equitable all Members of the United Nations should commit themselves to the principle that prosperity, like security, is indivisible. The persistent neglect of the economic circumstances of most countries in the third world puts at great risk lasting harmony in inter-State relations. The division of the world into a rich minority and a poor majority poses a threat to international peace and security. In the recent past the world has seen the end of certain rigidities in international political relations. This has given us all new hope. Let us

(President Babangida)

also eliminate the rigidities in international economic and financial relations.

We are nine years from the end of a momentous century, one that has witnessed wars, liberation and man's conquest of space. Let us create a new world order that would be beneficial to all. Let all nations resolve to make this last decade of the century a decade of peace, a decade of security and stability, a decade of racial harmony and a decade for development.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of the General Assembly I wish to thank the President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairman of the Organization of African Unity for the important statement he has just made.

General Ibrahim Babangida, President and Commander in Chief of the Armed Forces of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted from the General Assembly Hall.

AGENDA ITEM 9 (continued)

GENERAL DEBATE

Mr. SILVA CIMMA (Chile)(interpretation from Spanish): There are times in the life of nations when circumstances arise that offer exceptional opportunities for strengthening peace and cooperation between peoples, opportunities for correcting past mistakes, for making up for the time wasted in conflicts, for realizing long-cherished desires.

I believe, without exaggerated optimism, that we have begun passing through one of these stages. There are indeed many signs that this is the case. But of all of them, the most fundamental is the restoration of the dignity and freedom of the human being. That development has made it possible

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

for history to change its course, with the result that we have today the extraordinary opportunity - and also the vast responsibility - of attempting to build a better world than the one we have known up until now.

It is from this that this newly opened forty-sixth session of the General Assembly derives its special importance. Accordingly, Mr. President, we welcome your election, which enables an experienced diplomat to steer our debates to a successful conclusion.

The General Assembly has voted to admit seven new Members, thus raising the number of Members of the United Nations to 166 and simultaneously confirming the Organization's validity and universality. We greet the Democratic Republic of Korea, Estonia, the Federated States of Micronesia, Latvia, Lithuania, the Marshall Islands and the Republic of Korea, and extend a most cordial welcome to them.

The formidable progress made by the cause of freedom in a few short but intense years has created conditions that will enable the United Nations, without sterile dissent, to comply fully with the stipulations of its basic Charter.

Chile and Latin America at large have also been a part of this process. The map of Latin American democracies, yesterday mutilated and obscured in various places by various forms of authoritarianism, now begins to conform to the outlines of a world seeking to establish a dialogue based on the common ideals of democracy and respect for human rights.*

---

* Mr. Cordovez (Ecuador), Vice-President, took the Chair.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

At this very moment the renewed democratic reality of our continent is facing a crucial test in the form of the coup d'état in Haiti. This constitutes an affront to the international community - which just a few days ago welcomed the President of Haiti on this very podium - and the most reprehensible type of attack on peace and security in our region.

Yesterday the Organization of American States set in motion the mechanisms agreed upon at its last general assembly to ensure the effectiveness of the Santiago Commitment to Democracy. The meeting of foreign ministers of States members of the OAS adopted measures to ensure the re-establishment of the legitimate Government in Haiti and sent a mission to that country. It expressed its willingness to take further steps, if necessary, to obtain this objective. We agreed without hesitation to the approval of these agreements.

Chile - which has known the suffering incurred by the breakdown of liberty - expresses its solidarity with the Haitian people and demands the respect for their free exercise of sovereignty as expressed in December of 1990 at the polls. Democracy must be re-established in Haiti.

We have seen that it is the values of democracy that have transformed an environment of confrontation into one of collaboration. These values have made it possible to put an end to conflicts that had dragged on for a long time and to make progress towards the solution of other as yet unresolved problems. They have achieved a start to the dismantling of the reprehensible apartheid regime, which we hope will soon disappear. Likewise, they have made possible the unequivocal and unanimous condemnation and halting of aggression perpetrated against a Member of the United Nations, thus discouraging the repetition of such acts in the future.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

We agree with the statement in this year's report of the Secretary-General to the effect that: "the end of the long season of stagnation for the United Nations" (A/46/1, p. 2) has arrived. It is a reality recognized by all world leaders that the Organization has gained in authority and prestige.

In large measure, this has been due to the effort, tenacity and creative imagination of its current Secretary-General. As the end of his term of office approaches, we should place it on record that Javier Perez de Cuellar has been an exemplary model for the standard of conduct recommended by the first President of the General Assembly to the Organization's first Secretary-General: he has been firm without being intransigent, conciliatory without being weak, and impartial without exception.

Almost half a century after its birth, the United Nations will have to be adapted to the challenges of the coming millennium. The present session will have to concentrate its efforts on such tasks.

The far-reaching changes that have taken place on the world scene have, apart from moving beyond the former balance of power, changed the former concepts of security on which it was based. These changes now need to be reflected in the structures and procedures of the world Organization. They constitute capital which must be invested in bringing about significant progress in improving the mechanisms for peace, in negotiations for reaching substantive and balanced agreements on arms regulation, including the full and definitive prohibition of all weapons of mass destruction.

It is essential that the peace-keeping function entrusted to the United Nation by the San Francisco Charter should be fully discharged, in all forums, through multilateral action, and this should be a shared responsibility of all

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

Member States. The experience of the Persian Gulf should lead to improvements in the means available to the Security Council for taking action with regard to the subjects within its competence and with regard to compliance with its resolutions.

We must recognize that peace is a commodity that is under constant threat on many fronts. This makes it advisable to welcome and support the timely and expeditious contributions that emerge in various ways and in various regions and subregions for preserving peace in those very places. In turn, the role of the Secretary-General during crises and in preventing conflicts needs to be strengthened.

Chile is proud to add to its previous peace-keeping missions its current participation in the dedicated work of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission (UNIKOM) in the Persian Gulf and that of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO).

Above all, peace means that the disturbing tensions which still confront mankind have to be faced. The temptation to resort to force, terrorism, drug trafficking, the arms trade, the oppression of tyrannies, violation of human rights and the poverty that prevails today in extensive regions of the world cannot but be constant sources of conflict and insecurity .

In the immediate future, we are confident that, through understanding and collaboration, the dramatic situation now prevailing in Yugoslavia will be resolved; and we also hope for a fruitful outcome to the negotiations to ensure that the International Peace Conference on the Middle East will lead to a just solution to unresolved issues in that area.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

The same spirit of understanding and cooperation inspires President Aylwin's government and all the Latin American nations in their efforts to make our region one where peace and democracy prevail. The promising and unprecedented steps recently taken in this direction are the outcome of the profound adherence of Latin America's democracies to dialogue and the full validation of international law.

In this way, Chile and Argentina have offered the community of nations eloquent testimony to their peaceful and law-abiding will to resolve by mutual agreement the remaining border disputes between them - on one of the longest and most difficult frontiers in the world - by resorting, on the only point that could not be resolved directly, to the arbitration mechanism provided for in the 1984 Treaty of Peace and Friendship.

The conviction that all disputes can be resolved peacefully has made possible a strengthening of the climate of trust in the region. In the recent Mendoza Accord, which we signed jointly with Brazil and Argentina, later joined by Uruguay, we proclaimed our determination to eliminate from Latin America any possibility that chemical and biological weapons would be introduced. Such initiatives will have to be supplemented by the establishment of a broad nuclear-free zone when we succeed in ensuring that the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America enters fully into force.

In the context of the positive steps aimed at neutralizing the risks of conflict in the continent, we received with profound joy and satisfaction the news of the agreements on El Salvador signed just a few days ago in this Organization, which usher in the culminating phase of the pacification of Central America.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

In Latin America today, active and concerted political efforts are under way to meet the challenges of a changing world. Despite the difficulties and limitations - and precisely with a view to overcoming them - cooperative agreements and mechanisms are multiplying in number. There is a growing awareness that peace and security can be consolidated only if we are capable of overcoming the diverse problems that conspire against the well-being and stability of our peoples.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

Chile has committed itself to the task of making the promise of freedom and justice, which is inherent in democracy, a reality. This means bringing about growing levels of equity for our society, as well as effectively and coherently ensuring sustained and sustainable economic development.

Our country has recently demonstrated its effective export potential and its firm resolve to pursue the practices of an open and dynamic economy in conformity with the currently prevailing trends.

We consider that, in the present circumstances, an economy which aspires to be up to date must be able both to compete in all spheres of trade and to meet the demands of complementarity within its own region.

On the basis of this premise, Chile has joined resolutely in the process of Latin American integration within the framework of the Latin American Integration Association, employing a flexible approach which ties in with other encouraging formulas now current in the region.

We have concluded important agreements on economic issues with Argentina. We have just signed a highly important agreement with Mexico - the first of its kind in Latin America - which, after a brief period of progressive reduction of duties, will bring about freedom of trade between the two nations. We are developing similar arrangements with other countries of the region, namely, Venezuela, Colombia and Bolivia, with which we have already made significant progress.

In a world in which the trend towards globalization is daily becoming more marked, we believe that regional integration and openness to the world, far from being in conflict, are converging approaches which cannot fail to optimize and strengthen the potential of our economy.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

In this sense, we have positively appraised President Bush's Americas Initiative and are fully ready to continue making progress towards the implementation of its provisions. Similarly, we are seeking to strengthen our links with Europe and with the Pacific nations, which are already important.

Interaction between different regions, rather than confinement within them, must be viewed as vital to the economic progress of mankind. Therefore, for the present, the expansion of world trade, the growing flow of investment and the transfer of technologies cannot be exclusive privileges of the industrialized countries. Rather, their salutary and beneficial effects should be extended to all regions and countries. It would be particularly discouraging if the collapse of ideological walls were to be succeeded by the erection of economic walls blocking the developing world's aspiration to become integrated into the international economy.

We are concerned, therefore, that in contrast to the signs of opening up and liberalization, and in violation of basic norms of equity and reciprocity, protectionist positions continue to be reiterated, such as those which to date have made the Uruguay Round of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) unproductive and that drastically affect the ability of the nations that have fallen farthest behind to offer better living standards for their peoples. The time has come for the new focus on the human being that has become evident in the political sphere to be reflected likewise in the humanization of the economy.

In this connection, Chile is following with interest the proposals for reform that have been made with respect to the Economic and Social Council in an effort to systematize and coordinate its functions, rationalize its

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

resources and strengthen the topics of development and technical cooperation. This process should help link the Council more effectively with other international economic and financial organizations.

The political progress made by the international community in recent years has not been accompanied by a similar process in the field of social development. The "social cost" of political change and economic adjustment has led to an alarming deterioration in the standards and quality of life in many parts of the world, particularly in the developing countries.

It is in these countries that the crisis in social conditions is having its most acute and devastating effects, exacerbated by the harmful impact of environmental degradation, which is today attaining truly intolerable proportions. All this has led not only to their continued stagnation but even to an open deterioration of their development prospects, while at the same time constantly counteracting the efforts at modernization that are gaining some ground in these nations. This affects in particular the countries of Africa, which need special attention from the international community.

But this situation is not restricted to the developing world. Its effects and consequences extend, infiltrate, and bring pressure to bear on the industrialized societies as well, introducing increasingly disruptive elements.

Therefore, it is imperative that international development cooperation be recognized as vital to world security, and that all nations must be a part of it. Just as the international community has begun to be aware of environmental problems - and the forthcoming International Conference on Environment and Development is an encouraging sign of this - it must tackle social problems with equal resolve. For these purposes, there is no multilateral forum other than the United Nations system.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

That is why the Government of Chile strongly supports the holding of a world summit meeting for social development, the careful preparation of which should take place at the highest possible level, in a world-wide consensus to step up multisectoral development cooperation and strengthen security in its twin aspects of the individual and society.

The dignity of the human being and the application and improvement of democracy must be the ultimate objective and central concern of all nations. It is democratic systems, despite their imperfections, which afford the best guarantees of respect for the human being and which most effectively promote healthy international coexistence.

A major contribution would be made to this objective if democratic governments themselves were to invite observers from the United Nations or regional organizations to be present during their electoral processes. In this way, this practice would become universal in other regions, rendering obsolete the argument that it constitutes a threat to sovereignty.

The Secretary-General reflects our view fully when he states in his report on the work of the Organization:

> "... the principle of non-interference with the essential domestic jurisdiction of States cannot be regarded as a protective barrier behind which human rights could be ... violated with impunity."
>
> (A/46/1, p. 10)

To accept this false argument would run counter to the basic rule of all coexistence and betray the hopes of those who are victims of totalitarian systems and powerless to defend themselves. It is to them, and not to their persecutors, that we owe our loyalty.

Solidarity is on the side of democracy and condemns those who violate it.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

Accordingly, President Aylwin's Government - which has assumed an irrevocable moral commitment to the defence of these rights - will work untiringly, transcending frontiers and ideologies, to strengthen the mechanisms that protect democracies and, ultimately, the fundamental values of the human being. Accordingly, we attach special importance to the World Conference on Human Rights scheduled for 1993.

The last decade of this surprising century has opened up unsuspected possibilities for the international community - and also great uncertainties. It is for the nations assembled here, and for the Organization that brings them together, to know how to take advantage of the former and dispel the latter.

(Mr. Silva Cimma, Chile)

But as important as the security of States, or more important, are the security and integrity of individuals. It is in relation to these, in the final analysis, that the tasks that are set and the actions taken must find their meaning.

Large numbers of human beings continue to live an existence clouded by all kinds of deprivations and threats. We cannot put off meeting their demands and their hopes, or disappoint them. They express fundamental and constant values of mankind which we all see as our own.

We have an opportunity such as we have perhaps never had before of ensuring that those values begin to prevail once and for all. Achieving this will mean giving back to large numbers of persons their dignity and freedom so that they can shape for themselves the course of the history they wish to live.

Mr. AL-ERYANY (Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me pleasure to congratulate the President warmly on his election to the presidency of the current session of the General Assembly and to wish him success in carrying out his functions. I should also like to express appreciation of the wise manner in which his predecessor, Mr. Guido de Marco, the Foreign Minister of Malta, conducted the work of the last session.

Likewise, I wish to renew our appreciation and gratitude for the active role of Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, the Secretary-General, who has effectively contributed to the enhancement of the United Nations role and has given shape to the principles and purposes of its Charter in many fields of international life.

I should also like to take this opportunity to express our satisfaction with the contents of the Secretary-General's report to the General Assembly at this session. We agree with his analysis of the world situation and the role

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

of the world Organization, especially his emphasis on the necessity of respecting the Charter and international law.

It is a source of pride for me to stand before the international community as representative of Yemen more than a year after the struggle of the Yemeni people was crowned with achievement of the great goal of unification. This unification is the incarnation of our people's hopes and aspirations throughout its long struggle. This historic event represents our modest contribution to the changes now taking place in many parts of the world, changes which herald the emergence of a new world order. We take pride in the fact that the unification of Yemen is a unique experience in our region. This unification has brought down, once for all, the walls that separated the two parts of Yemen. With the unification, another wall was brought down - namely, that which forced the world to deal with a divided Yemen. Our people has achieved its political unification, peacefully and democratically, on the basis of the Constitution of the Republic of Yemen, adopted through the popular referendum of May 1991. This Constitution has become our guiding light for building a new Yemen that enjoys freedom, democracy, justice and equality. It is the cornerstone of the institutions through which all Yemeni citizens may exercise their full rights and actively participate in political life and the processes of economic development in our country.

As we speak about democracy and equality, which are prerequisites of building a unified society in Yemen, we condemn from this rostrum the coup d'état that ousted the democratic Government of Haiti and call for the restoration of the elected President.

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

Now that Yemen has been unified, we can clearly voice our hope that there will emerge a new world order, which will bring to all peoples freedom, equality and social and political justice. Our hope is nourished by the developments which have spared humanity the risks of the cold war and helped avert the damage of nuclear confrontation. In this respect, we are pleased to welcome the initiative by President George Bush of the United States of America to remove certain categories of nuclear weapons. We hope that this will be the beginning of disarmament in the area of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and that, as such, it will open the road to a process of full and real disarmament, which would rid the world not only of nuclear, but also of other overkill weapons.

It is heartening to watch the consequences of those new developments. They have led to the unification of Germany and the independence of the three Baltic Republics, which have recently been admitted to membership of the United Nations. This is a welcome development. We also welcome the accession of the two Korean States, since we believe that their membership of the United Nations will bring the Organization closer to universality. We sincerely hope that the Korean people will achieve unification by peaceful and democratic means. I should also like to express our pleasure at the accession by the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia to the membership of the United Nations. This, in our view, is further testimony that the goal of United Nations universality is being pursued.

Those positive developments in international relations have also paved the way for the start of serious efforts aimed at settling many regional problems, such as those of Cyprus, Western Sahara, southern Africa, Angola, El

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

Salvador, Afghanistan, Cambodia and others. Conversely, the crisis in the Gulf erupted in a manner which ran counter to the principles that govern relations between States, principles which we all observe and respect.

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

Those principles include the non-use of force in the settlement of disputes, the inadmissibility of the violation of the sovereignty of an independent State, and the inadmissibility of the acquisition of the lands of others by force. On the basis of this constant premise, and of our appreciation of the potential dangers inherent in this crisis, the leadership of the Republic of Yemen made relentless efforts to contain and resolve the crisis peacefully and in a brotherly fashion on the basis of respect for the independence and sovereign rights of every Arab State.

Today, in the aftermath of all the complications and the grave military developments witnessed by the region, we feel that our national Arab duty and our geographic location, by virtue of which we are an integral part of the Arabian peninsula and the Red Sea, make it incumbent upon us to redouble our efforts to avert the dangers that threaten the security and stability of our region, to put an end to the consequences of the war that took place there, and to normalize the situation in the area. To achieve this, all the countries of the region should put this phase behind them and intensify their concerted efforts to improve the lot of our peoples and to save the region from a repetition of the recent grave developments that have adversely affected our our Arab causes and threatened our future.

We believe that we still have the time and the opportunity to transcend the present stagnation in relations between the countries of the region. Cooperation and brotherliness should replace war and confrontation. If Europe, with all its different nationalities and past conflicts, has managed to build cooperation on common denominators, we must realize that the bonds that unite us are bonds not only of nationality and religion but also of a common history, geography, language, culture and a common destiny.

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

This goal should be achieved through candour and truthfulness in analysing the crisis that befell the region, putting aside any insistence on the correctness of this or that individual position. We are all required to work towards the normalization of our relations and the restoration of peace in our region on a solid and sound basis characterized by mutual respect for sovereignty and independence, non-interference in internal affairs, and the exchange of benefits for the good of all the peoples of the area.

All countries of the region, including Iraq, must take part in this process. To begin with, the people of Iraq should be enabled to get over its plight. This requires the return of prisoners and hostages to their families. For humanitarian reasons now accepted by most countries, it is necessary also that the international community lifts the economic blockade imposed upon the Iraqi people. It is essential that the Iraqi people should be enabled to reconstruct their country, repair the damage caused by the war, and to live normally. All Iraqi citizens - especially the elderly, women and children - should be assured of a decent life, including the provision of food, medicines and shelter, like every other people in the region and indeed in the world as a whole.

Our collective responsibility makes it incumbent upon us to work together with the countries of the region. This is not only natural but urgent. We should also work to remove the barriers between the countries of the region. This is essential if our region is to have security and stability, and if it is to be spared the risks of tension and explosions. It should also help to achieve prosperity for our peoples. Moreover, it is our hope that the vigour and optimism generated by the Security Council's determined approach in applying Chapter VII of the Charter in dealing with the crisis in the Gulf will be consolidated further. We want it to be the rule, not the exception.

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

We want it to reinforce the Council's position as a world authority that can enforce its resolutions by the various effective means at its disposal. In our view, this resolve has developed into a mechanism based on the fulfilment of the concepts and rules of the United Nations Charter.

This Organization should persevere in applying such rules uniformly in addressing all international questions, foremost among which is the Arab-Israeli conflict in the Middle East, and especially the question of the Palestinian Arab people, which is the core of the conflict. Only such a serious and balanced approach would consolidate the credibility and seriousness of the international community. It should remove any double standards in the application of just laws and principles. In addition, it would help prevent the collapse of the pillars of a durable and just peace in the Middle East and the world as a whole. To this end, we must all work to develop and apply solid foundations for an international consensus on the Middle East question. In this regard, the most important fact is that no durable, just and comprehensive peace will ever be possible in the region unless the Palestinian people is enabled to exercise its inalienable national rights, and unless Israel withdraws completely from the Palestinian territories occupied since 1967, including the holy city of Al-Quds and the other occupied Arab territories.

We in the Republic of Yemen look forward with optimism to the success of the peace initiative led by the United States of America. We hope that it will lead to just peace in our region. In this respect we believe that the resolutions and decisions of the Palestine National Council, which met recently in Algeria, will contribute positively and constructively to the success of peace efforts in the region. We call upon Israel to take a

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

similar positive stand. It is also our view that if these endeavours are to succeed, all the unlimited political, economic, military and financial support that Israel receives should cease. In addition, the Security Council should not be prevented from exercising the power it possesses under the Charter in acting against Israel, whose record is replete with unpunished and unhindered violations of the Charter and with constant and blatant rejection of the resolutions of the Security Council and of the General Assembly. If peoples are not to be disappointed, and if United Nations resolutions are not to lose their credibility, the international community must urgently put an end to Israel's non-compliance with Security Council and General Assembly resolutions that declare the annexation of Al-Quds null and void. The international community should also put pressure on Israel to desist from its policy and practice of confiscating, and settling Jewish immigrants on, Palestinian lands, as well as all its other suppressive and oppressive measures that constitute a flagrant violation of the Charter of the United Nations, principles of international law and relevant international agreements.

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

It is high time that an end is put to Israel's annexation of the Syrian Golan and its continued occupation of southern Lebanon. Also, we emphasize that the cornerstone for establishing a durable and just peace lies in granting the Palestinian people its right to self-determination on its national soil under the leadership of its sole and legitimate representative, the Palestine Liberation Organization.

We call upon those countries which are assisting the immigration of Jews to halt that immigration, which must lead to the expansion of the policy of settlement in the occupied Palestinian and Arab lands. These countries should put pressure on Israel to put a stop to the building of settlements in the occupied territories. In this context, we renew our call for strong international measures to eliminate Israel's nuclear armaments, especially in view of the grave dangers these weapons pose to the whole region.

My country, which belongs to the group of least developed countries, still suffers the economic ills associated with being such a country. Accordingly, we believe that the future of the new world order will be determined not only by progress on the political level but also by concomitant achievements on the economic level. This prompts us, given the fact that developing countries form the majority in this Organization, to hope that our concerns in respect of overcoming our economic difficulties are felt to the same extent by our partners, the nations of the industrialized developed world.

We know that this is not an easy task. However, it will be the acid test of the success or failure of the international community's efforts to lay the foundations of the new world order. Unless the discrepancies are removed and the gap between rich and poor countries is at least narrowed and the economic barriers between developed and developing countries are lifted, every

(Mr. Al-Eryany, Yemen)

achievement will remain precarious. The deteriorating economic situation should be dealt with by our partners on the basis of equality and justice. This would guarantee continued interaction between us and our partners, which is an absolute must if a world economic collapse is to be averted at a time when we have high hopes for achieving economic progress in the wake of all the political gains we have witnessed so far.

Our future options are clear. With concerted efforts by all, we can determine, at this historical juncture, the principal features of the transition to a new world order. Yemen will spare no effort in its endeavours to remain an active partner in the international community: we sincerely wish to work hard with the other countries of the world in order to consolidate international peace and security and promote stability, prosperity and social and economic progress for all peoples. We are hopeful that this session will initiate sincere efforts towards these goals.

The meeting rose at 12.45 p.m.